



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: James R. Helmer

**SUBJECT: RED LIGHT RUNNING
REDUCTION EFFORTS**

DATE: May 19, 2006

Approved	/s/	Date	05/25/06
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BACKGROUND

As part of the March 21, 2006 Council approved Mayor's Budget Message, the City Manager was directed to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the 200 red light running indicators and the countdown pedestrian signals to determine if further traffic safety enhancements are needed, such as cameras.

ANALYSIS

The FY 2005-2006 budget allocated \$500,000 for the San José Safe Streets Initiative project. This project funded citywide traffic and pedestrian safety improvements, including installation of red light running indicators, countdown signal heads, and flashing beacons. As of May 15, 2006, 190 of the 200 red light running indicators have been installed. Countdown signal heads have been installed at approximately 45 of the 64 intersections identified in the project. All of the remaining safety devices will be installed by June 30, 2006.

Previous installations of red light running indicators and countdown signal heads in San José and other cities have shown positive impact on vehicular and pedestrian safety. Transportation (DOT) and Police Department (SJPd) will jointly analyze the effectiveness of these devices in 2006-2007.

This analysis is required by state law if the City is to consider future use of automated camera enforcement systems at certain signalized locations. Specifically, the California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 21455.5 authorizes government agencies to operate a red light running system if certain requirements, including but not limited to the following, are met:

- Prior to installing cameras, alternate safety strategies must be evaluated
- Minimum 30-day public notification is required before the system is activated and citations are issued
- Signage must be visible to motorists at intersections or major entrances to the City

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- Traffic signal timing shall be in compliance with Caltrans guidelines
- All citations must be reviewed and approved by local law enforcement (SJPD)
- Photographs may only be used for red light running enforcement purposes

An informational report on red light photo enforcement systems will be presented to the Building Better Transportation Committee at its June 5, 2006 meeting. In that report, staff is recommending the following actions:

- Evaluate effectiveness of 200 red light running indicators after one year of their installation, and determine if further safety enhancements are needed, such as cameras.
- Analyze any available statistics on red light running, pros and cons of a camera system, equipment costs, and additional staffing needed by the DOT and SJPD to properly implement and administer the program.
- After completion of the evaluation, develop recommendations and present to the Building Better Transportation Committee

This memorandum has been coordinated with the Police Department.

/s/

JAMES R. HELMER, Director
Department of Transportation